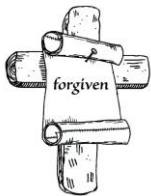


- The priest then mediates God's forgiveness to the child through the power invested in ordination.
- The child returns to parents/guardians and is received back with a big hug.
- All sit in prayerful silence reflecting on the love shown to us by God through one another and in the Bible throughout the time of confession.
- All say the *Prayer After Forgiveness* and the prayer of penance together.
- Fr Tony will read the concluding prayer
- The final hymn will be sung by all gathered.

Parents, guardians, godparents, grandparents, parishioners, etc. are all welcome to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the service also. If you wish to do so, simply take the seat after your own child has confessed.



Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time In the Parish of St Philomena, Palmerstown. 2020

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration of God's love for us and an opportunity for us to grow more loving. The Sacrament is participated in before First Holy Communion at an age when children are able to recognise when they are doing right and wrong and how to make amends. The sacraments blesses our efforts to live better lives with the many gifts that God has given us to reach for our greatest potential. The sacrament of reconciliation is an acknowledgment that we may always make a fresh start and that we may count on God's help to do so. God is love and wants us to experience and share love every day of our lives.



The most important exercise to do as a family in preparation is to acknowledge child's demonstration of love and selflessness. Take a minute at the end of each day to consider:

- When did I show love today?
- When did someone show love to me today?
- When did I miss the chance to show love today?
- How can I be more loving tomorrow?
- Ask God to help us to be more like Jesus.

Prayers for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

The prayers below are in the *Grow in Love* book also. *The Act of Sorrow, Prayer for Forgiveness* and *Prayer After Forgiveness* are part of the Reconciliation Service. It would be of greatest value if the prayers were taught by parents.

Each line in each of the prayers tell us something about God and God's love for us. A valuable exercise could be done by taking a line each night and to consider what it means in your child's life.

For example:

1. O my God, I thank you for loving me.

Perhaps draw a picture of a time when child felt loved and writing a prayer on the picture thanking God for the person concerned.

2. I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and not loving God

We commit sin when we are selfish and forget to love – no one is perfect. Taking this for a positive perspective – think about a time when you were loving. Then think about when you could have been more loving. What do you need to change so that you can be more loving tomorrow.

3. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again.

What do you want Jesus to help you to do tomorrow so that He will help you to be more loving.

Act of Sorrow

O my God, I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins,
for not loving others and not loving you.
Help me to live like Jesus
and not sin again . Amen

Prayer for Forgiveness

O my God, help me to remember the times
when I didn't live
as Jesus asked me to.
Help me to be sorry and to try again.
Amen

Prayer after Forgiveness

O my God thank you for forgiving me.
Help me to love others.
Help me to live as Jesus asked me to.
Amen

The Confiteor (a prayer that is part of the rite of reconciliation at Mass.)

I confess to almighty God. And to you, my brothers and sisters,
That I have sinned through my own fault,
In my thoughts and in my words,
In what I have done
And in what I have failed to do;
And I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
All the angels and saints,

And you my brothers and sisters
To pray for me to the Lord our God.
Amen



What will happen at the Reconciliation Service?

- The children will have been taught about the Sacrament of Reconciliation through the Grow in Love programme in school and home. Parents and teachers will teach the prayers concerned. The hymns will be learnt in school.
- The children presenting for the Sacrament of Reconciliation along with their families will arrive and be in their seats by 7.10p.m. on the evening concerned. Families may sit together – it is a parish and family celebration.
- A practice of the prayers and hymns along with explanation of the service will take place at 7.10p.m.
- The service will commence promptly at 7.30p.m. with the children leading the singing.
- Fr Tony will say the opening prayer introducing the service.
- Readings from the Bible will be read, including the story of Zaccheus which may be found in the Bible at Luke 18:18-23 and in the Grow in Love programme.
- Fr Tony will speak about the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- All present will be guided through an examination of conscience.
- All will say the *Prayer Before Reconciliation* and the *Act of Sorrow* together.
- Parents/Guardians will be invited to present their child to one of the two/three priests present.
- The child will sit with the priest at the front of the church and will say:
 - Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession.
 - The child will then be invited to name some times when they didn't show love.